

# How the Mediums "Brought Back"

And How They Were Later  
and Detective, Told by the  
House the "Materializations"



Photo N.Y.H.

A Photograph of the Robes Which Mrs. Thompson Wore While Impersonating "Spirits" in the Materializing Seances, and Which Were Torn from Her by the Detective and Police Woman.

Mrs. Eva Thompson, the Materializing Medium Who "Brought Back" Sir Conan Doyle's "Mother" for Him and Was Later Detected Impersonating Another "Spirit."

"No, all hymns are the same to the spirits, so long as you keep singing industriously."

"Very well, we will," said Sir Arthur. "Now, what are the other conditions?"

"One other condition is that you don't get up and rudely turn on the lights," explained medium Mr. Thompson.

"We have been to enough seances to know better than that," said Lady Doyle. "Of course we never would."

"All right," said Mr. Thompson. "I am glad you have learned what is correct in these cases. If the light is turned on, it might kill; at any rate, it would injure the medium. Likewise, if you touch the spirit you will probably kill yourself. Under only one circumstance may you touch the spirit—that is when the spirit says so."

"We will abide by all the rules," one of the Doyle party, I forget which, assured Mr. Thompson. "Now, tell us the last of the conditions."

"The last conditions are two," explained Thompson. "First, don't stare at the materialized spirit. It's very bad form. In good society you never stare at anybody, especially when they are looking. Well, so it is with the spirits. Don't stare at them. It disturbs the conditions."

"All right," agreed the Doyles, "we promise not to stare."

"The last condition, and we will start the performance," promised Thompson, husband of Mrs. Thompson. "Don't rudely press too near the spirits. Give them elbow room."

At this Conan Doyle lifted his glasses to his eyes, and placed his face near the medium, Thompson.

"Why," asked he, "why may I not step very close to the spirits?"

"Because," explained Thompson, "the spirits my wife calls up greatly object to being pressed close to. They are the denizens of spaciousness. Therefore, they demand room—yes, I repeat it—room, when they return."

"Very well," agreed Doyle, "we understand. No lights; we must sing, at intervals; we must not rudely stare, and we must not touch the spirit."

"No, you must not, otherwise, the vibrations will abort, and the seance run awry."



How "Ghosts" Are Made to Appear from Dark Cabinets. The Medium, Lying Upon the Floor, Raises a White Cloth Saturated in Some Phosphorescent Substance. In the Darkened Room the Fraud's Arm Is Not Seen and the Illusion of a Spectral Form Is Perfect.

dead, can bring those dead back to us, in materialized form, and even make them speak. Such a medium we have at our church, Sir Arthur, in Mrs. Eva Thompson."

At this Sir Arthur agreed. "You are right," said he. "Such a phenomenon is rare. The materializing medium certainly gives us better scope for communication and investigation than any other spiritual manifestation."

Then after the introductions we proceeded to explain to the Doyles the procedure of our seances. Certain things Mr. Brownell impressed upon them particularly.

"Now, Sir Arthur," said he, "there are two or three points we must warn you about. If you don't comply with these, the sittings can't go on. Our materializing mediums cannot work for you, Sir Arthur, unless you conform. These are, first, that you promise to sing, you and Lady Doyle and your secretary and all the party. You must sing while Eva Thompson is going into a trance; you must sing while she's coming out, and you must sing in between."

At this the great Englishman looked a little discouraged. "I'm—not much of a singer," said he, "besides I am—er—so to speak—a trifle deaf."

"That's all right," somebody told him. "The spirits don't care if you are deaf, nor if you get out of tune, so long as you sing. Otherwise the materializing medium cannot perform."

"I will try," said Doyle; "are there—er—any hymns the medium prefers?"

When His "Mother" Came Out of the Dark Cabinet Sir Conan Asked if He Might Kiss the "Spirit's" Hand. Consent Was Given and the Distinguished Author Stepped Forward Falteringly, Raised the Hand to His Lips, and, Greatly Moved, Let a Tear Fall Upon It.

ALL of us are eager to know, of course, what becomes of our loved ones after death, and all of us would more than welcome any means by which communication could be opened with those departed loved ones to discover just how they are faring. So deep-rooted and so sacred are these longings of ours to get in touch with our dead that it is hard to conceive anything more cruel and heartless than wilful deception in such a matter.

When Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, distinguished English author and creator of the master detective mind of fiction, "Sherlock Holmes," declared solemnly that he had not only talked to his departed loved ones, but had also seen and touched them, a great many people took it for granted that Sir Arthur had brought into his spiritualistic observations the same power of analysis and observation he showed in his "Sherlock Holmes" cases. And if this had happened for Sir Arthur, they argued, it might also happen for them. Their hopes were fed.

But the story of Dr. Leonard J. Hartman, printed on these pages, would seem to show that the distinguished novelist had not brought all his analytic powers to bear upon the problem, and so casts great doubt upon the authenticity of his other experiences. Dr. Hartman tells the story of two seances given by the mediums, William R. Thompson and Eva A. Thompson, his wife. At the first of these the "spirit" of Sir Arthur's mother was "brought back."

The second seance was three nights later, when Policewoman Genevieve McLaughlin and Detective Andrew McLaughlin, of the Fourth Inspection District, New York police force, were present. These able members of the police force were not so thoroughly convinced of the authenticity of the spirit of "Aunt Emma," invoked for Miss McLaughlin by the same mediums, as Sir Arthur had been of the spirit of his "mother."

Accordingly, Miss McLaughlin grappled with the spirit of "Aunt Emma," while Detective McLaughlin took care of Thompson. When the lights were turned on the "spirit" proved to be Eva Thompson, the medium, who was supposed to be rigidly entranced in the cabinet. Arrest of the two Thompsons followed.

Mr. Brownell, president of the First Spiritualist Church, whose wife's "spirit" was also impersonated by the versatile Mrs. Thompson, says:

"I was as much deceived as Sir Conan Doyle. If I had thought that it was somebody impersonating my wife I would have thrown her in the East River. These frauds are most deplorable and they do a great deal of harm to genuine spiritualistic phenomena."

Dr. Hartman's story follows:

By Dr. Leonard J. Hartman.

WHEN I read of the remarkable experiences Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had with the spirits of his relatives, returned to talk with the distinguished creator of Sherlock Holmes, I have to wonder—since a happening last May 9.

When the analytical pen of the famous author describes how the spirits of dead dear ones spoke to him and touched his hands and gave him messages from spirit land I have to wonder if those spirits were as fraudulent as the spirits which spoke with Doyle at my house on the date already mentioned.

It was at my house, No. 282 West Seventieth street, New York, that the great Englishman, Sir Conan Doyle, and his wife, Lady Doyle, and his secretary, Major Sherrill Wood, I think the name was, and a few others of the faithful were heartlessly deceived by William R. Thompson and Eva A. Thompson, who claimed to be materializing mediums.

This materializing means that the medium can summon the spirit of your dear one from the beyond of the departed and can make that spirit talk and walk around for the benefit of the relative still in the flesh.

At my house the "mother" of Conan Doyle returned and let her son tap her on the back of the hand.

I am one of the trustees of the First Spiritualist Church, New York City. Until the police came to my house and grasped the "materialized spirit" of a ghost and fought with it as the lights were turned on, disclosing the spirit to be the medium

herself, I believed as much in the spirits which were nightly invoked from the cabinet at my house as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle believed in them.

Mr. Clay Brownell, the president of our church, had written to Sir Arthur that he had two very wonderful materializing mediums at our place of worship and asked Sir Arthur to put these mediums to the test. Sir Arthur had consented.

I shall never forget the performance that went on in that room—the front room on the second floor of my house. The Doyles, Major Sherrill Wood, Sir Arthur's secretary, Mr. Brownell, Miss Alice Moriarity, my wife, Mrs. Hartman, myself, twelve altogether, including the Thompsons, man and wife, were present. The Doyles arrived at a little after eight. We all then went upstairs, where we darkened the room.

But before this we introduced the two mediums, Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, to the distinguished Englishman.

"This," Sir Arthur was told, "is Mr. Thompson, our inspired minister. And this is Mrs. Eva Thompson, our inspired ministers' wife, likewise inspired herself. We congratulate ourselves, Sir Arthur, that Mrs. Thompson is the best and, in fact, the only materializing medium here in New York City. Any medium, Sir Arthur, fraudulent or inferior, can describe to you vaguely, vague conditions which he says he sees happening to dear ones who have crossed to spirit land. But only a medium with genuine powers, consecrated to his task, his sensitive nature attuned to the finer harmonies of our etherized

is immaterial to the spirits what we sing, so long as we do sing why not start—er—'Onward Christian Soldiers' all over again? It is the one hymn, from my whole repertory, which I sing with least exertion."

So we all started "Onward Christian Soldiers" over again. But the wait was becoming weary. At last, just before the spirit made her appearance, this was the monologue in my darkened office. Sir Arthur was the speaker.

"Onward Christian Soldiers," sang he, feebly, from a parched throat. Then he broke off, "Isn't it about time for the spirit to appear? Marching as to war—it is too bad conditions are not so arranged that I could get a glass of water." With the Cross of Jesus, "please do not be too critical. I know that I am very much off the tune." Going on before—"It really is taking the spirits a long while to-night, isn't it?"

Then he interjected, when we were in the middle of another hymn, as follows: "We shall meet beyond the river, where bright angels' feet have trod—we must have been singing fully half an hour—meet and gather at the river—is anything stirring yet in the cabinet—close by the throne of God—we are really all to be congratulated—here's the spirit at last."

Sir Arthur desisted singing, while out from the slightly parted curtains of the cabinet appeared a form, white, ghostlike, quiet in dignity, contained, astral, cold and aloof.

"And who art thou, spirit?" asked Thompson, sitting near the curtain. The spirit whispered something, very obligingly, to Thompson, and he announced, with a flourish:

"I will now announce to you, ladies and gentlemen and Sir Arthur, that the spirit of Mr. Brownell's wife is now among us."

Mr. Brownell, as I explained before, is the president of the First Spiritualist Church. The spirit bowed, very formal. At this Mr. Brownell stood up.

"Very interesting; very interesting phenomena. The only drawback," Conan Doyle explained, "is that we can hardly see the spirit; and we are at such a distance, we can hardly tell how much force your wife—er—Mrs. Brownell—retains in her spirit body."

"Well, we'll see," said Mr. Brownell. Then he addressed the spirit.

"Now, wife," said he, "we are happy to have with us this evening one of the most

(Continued on Next Page)